

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 HEW-04 /061 W

-----084171 201757Z /64

O R 201730Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5037

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USDA/FAS WASHDC

CINC EUR VAIHINGEN

USNMR SHAPE

CINC USAREUR HEIDELBERG

CINC USAFE RAMSTEIN

CINC USNAVEUR LONDON

USMISSION USNATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI, SOCI, EAGR, GW

SUBJECT: ASSISTANCE TO MILITARY PERSONNEL SUFFERING
FINANCIAL HARDSHIP AS A RESULT OF DM APPRECIATION

BEGIN SUMMARY: I WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF
STATE ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE IN OBTAINING
CHANGES IN REGULATIONS TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR MILITARY
PERSONNEL AND THEIR DEPENDENTS STATIONED IN GERMANY
TO BENEFIT FROM THE FOOD STAMP AND SCHOOL LUNCH PRO-
GRAMS. THIS WOULD NOT ONLY EASE THE FINANCIAL HARDSHIP
WHICH THEY ARE SUFFERING BUT WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO BETTER
MORALE AND INCREASED MILITARY EFFICIENCY.END SUMMARY.

1. I AM DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER THE EFFECTS OF DM APPRE-
CIATION ON US MILITARY PERSONNEL AND DEPENDENTS STA-
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TIONED IN GERMANY. THEIR PLIGHT HAS BEEN EXTENSIVELY
REPORTED BY THE GERMAN MEDIA. IT HAS GONE SO FAR AS
TO ELICIT INDIVIDUAL OFFERS OF CHARITY FROM THE GERMAN
POPULACE. THE MORALE OF JUNIOR ENLISTED SOLDIERS IS
BEING ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE LOWERING EXCHANGE RATE.
ALTHOUGH ALLOWANCES FOR COST OF LIVING AND STATION
HOUSING ARE PROVIDED TO SOME, ABOUT 55 PERCENT OF

USAREUR SOLDIERS DO NOT RECEIVE ALLOWANCES. THESE MEMBERS ARE PRIMARILY IN GRADES E-1 TO E-4 WITH LESS THAN TWO YEARS SERVICE. THESE JUNIOR ENLISTED SOLDIERS INCUR A SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL BURDEN IN BRINGING THEIR FAMILIES TO EUROPE. THESE FAMILY UNITS ARE FORCED TO LIVE UNDER EXTREME FINANCIAL HARDSHIP, CAUSING A DETERIORATION OF MORALE AND JOB PERFORMANCE. THIS DETERIORATION AFFECTS OUR COMBAT READINESS IN GENERAL.

2. IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES, I HAVE ASKED MY STAFF TO LOOK INTO THIS SITUATION TO SEE WHETHER THERE ARE ANY STEPS WHICH COULD BE TAKEN TO ASSIST MILITARY PERSONNEL AND DEPENDENTS. TWO SUCH PROPOSALS ARE TO MAKE FAMILY UNITS ELIGIBLE FOR FOOD STAMPS AND SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAMS. THESE PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE TO FAMILY UNITS ASSIGNED TO CONUS. CURRENTLY, LEGISLATION DOES NOT PROVIDE ASSISTANCE OUTSIDE THE 50 STATES, D.C., GUAM, PUERTO RICO, AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS. ALSO, SINCE THE PROGRAMS ARE ADMINISTERED BY THE STATES AND TERRITORIES, THERE IS NO ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO AMERICANS RESIDING OUTSIDE THE U.S. THUS, THE RIGHT OF TAX-PAYING CITIZENS TO FOOD STAMPS AND SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAMS IS BEING DENIED DUE TO FOREIGN MILITARY ASSIGNMENT. CONGRESSIONAL ACTION IS NECESSARY, AND I UNDERSTAND THAT LEGISLATION HAS BEEN INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE JOHN ERLBORN (R., ILLINOIS)

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I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IS CONSIDERING SEVERAL ALTERNATIVES CONCERNING SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAMS FOR THE DOD SCHOOL SYSTEM.

3. ANYTHING THE DEPARTMENT CAN DO TO ASSIST DOD IN OBTAINING THE NECESSARY CHANGES IN REGULATIONS AND LEGISLATION TO PERMIT MILITARY PERSONNEL AND THEIR FAMILIES STATIONED IN GERMANY TO BENEFIT FROM THE FOOD STAMP AND SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAMS WOULD, TO MY MIND, BE NOT ONLY HUMANE, BUT CONTRIBUTE TO MILITARY EFFICIENCY AND REFLECT TO THE GERMAN POPULACE OUR CONCERN FOR THE LEAST FAVORED OF OUR COUNTRY.

STOESSEL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE, MILITARY PERSONNEL, PERSONNEL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BONN01183
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780031-0234
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780142/aaaabjcj.tel
Line Count: 107
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d128c7e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3743583
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ASSISTANCE TO MILITARY PERSONNEL SUFFERING FINANCIAL HARDSHIP AS A RESULT OF DM APPRECIATION BEGIN
SUMMARY: I WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT
TAGS: MILI, SOCI, EAGR, GE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d128c7e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014